

INFORMATION ~~SECRET~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~FWD  
863

COUNTRY Syria/Iraq/Transjordan

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SUBJECT Statements of Ahmad Rifa'i Concerning Greater Syria  
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SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

1. In the middle of November Ahmad Rifa'i, then Syrian Minister of Public Works in the cabinet of Jamil Mardam, told source that Jamil Madfa'i and Muhammad Sadr, former Iraqi Premiers, together with other Iraqi leaders, had urged the Iraqi Regent, 'Abd-al-Ilah, to effect the Greater Syria plan, with the following conditions:
  - a. Egypt to be given the Negeb area.
  - b. The four Syrian districts which were annexed by Lebanon in 1920 to be incorporated into Greater Syria or, in the event that Lebanon retained the district of Beirut, then the districts of Tripoli, Akkar, the south and part of the Biqa' to be incorporated into Greater Syria.
2. It is understood that the Regent has discussed this plan with the Iraqi Premier, Muzahim Pachachi, who has been delegated to confer with the Egyptians in an effort to end their opposition to Greater Syria.
3. Ahmad Rifa'i stated that, although President Quwwatli of Syria as well as a number of his deputies and friends oppose Greater Syria, the majority of Syrians favor it. Rifa'i stated that Quwwatli opposes Greater Syria because it would end his aspirations of being Syria's permanent President. Jamil Mardam pretends to oppose it for Quwwatli's sake, Rifa'i stated.
4. Rifa'i claims that Quwwatli, through Ahmad Sidqi Pasha, a Transjordan commander, has asked King 'Abdullah to entrust the vice-regency in Damascus to Quwwatli himself, with Jamil Mardam and others of his followers as assistants, in the event that Greater Syria is effected. It is reported that 'Abdullah is discussing Quwwatli's demands with high officials and with his nephew, the Regent of Iraq. ~~SECRET~~  
Comment. See ~~SECRET~~ for a different statement concerning Quwwatli's feelings about Greater Syria.)

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